



A PURVIEW OF POSTCOLONIAL DISCOURSE IN THE WORKS OF AMITAV GHOSH

Mrs. N. Siva Priya¹, Maalya S Jayan², Dr. T. Mangayarkarasi³

¹ Assistant Professor of English, The M.D.T.Hindu College, Pettai.Tirunelveli, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

² Research Scholar, PG Department and Research center of English, Rani Anna Government College for Women, Tirunelveli, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

³ Assistant Professor, PG Department and Research center of English, Rani Anna Government College for Women, Tirunelveli, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

ABSTRACT

Postcolonial discourse underlines an unprecedented concern of the west over the non-west or its cultural 'other'. It denotes the continuum of cultural confrontations in the form of resistance movements against continuing colonial hegemony in the postcolonial period. Amitav Ghosh points out a common thread of postcolonial concern over the subaltern consciousness in the postmodern scenario while penning down the distorted history and culture of the country in his creative writings. The present paper instigated by a close reading of Amitav Ghosh's fictional creations aims to bring out a purview of postcolonial discourses in his works.

KEYWORDS: Postcolonialism, Culture, Exploitation

INTRODUCTION

Post colonialism, as a literary movement seeks to restore the lost heritage of syncretic cultures and to refrain cultural harmony in the hybrid postcolonial context. Amitav Ghosh's creative writings of the post colonial Indian context reveal the fact that the colonial as well as the cultural discourse has remolded the historiography through forced homogeneities of the cultural diversity of India. India in her postcolonial phase evinces the tendency of growing westernization and the centralization of power that indicates the emergence of a bourgeois perspective. Being typical commonwealth literature, Ghosh's writings are endorsing the canoes of good writing- Timelessness and Universality.

Western imperialism of the Third World nationalism feed off each other and consequently new alignments made across borders, types and nations provoke challenges to the static notion of identity. Said comments, "Partly because of Empire, all cultures are involved in one another, none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated and non-monolithic. The heterogeneous postcolonial society in India as pictured by Amitav Ghosh is formulated by the social transformations that started from the very beginning of colonial rule.

Ghosh, a writer with social commitment reveals the reality that in India, nationalism gathers impetus from bourgeois liberalism and humanism of the West and cultural chauvinism of the East to resist colonial domination. In postcolonial India, identity is determined through the conditions of contingency and incongruity ingrained in its people. Hence an Indian possesses multiple identities, but none of them pure. The complexity is well expressed by Ghosh in and dismantles the master narratives

English alternatives in a daringly different style. A creative use of this kind of Indianised English effectively presents the socio- cultural context in which the Indian characters code their indigenous cultural, social, religious customs, value systems and belief systems into English with ingenuity and care.

The protagonists in Amitav Ghosh's works are trying to find their own identities and liberate themselves. The character of Deeti in *Sea of Poppies* carrying the burden of her colonized kind of past life in India even if she moving towards the future. There is a point of union of the life she spent in India and her present life. In the second phase of life she wiped out the typical image of motherhood. It indicates the comparison and union of colonial and postcolonial India. The transformation of the protagonist from a submissive domestic life shows the establishment of a new social identity.

The other women characters like Munia and Paulette are also representatives of postcolonial critique of Indian society. Deeti is the representative of Indian culture in the novel *Sea of Poppies* and Chandan Singh is a colonial representative. Deeti opposing the conventional images of patriarchy in Indian culture.

Another protagonist 'Tipu' in the novel *Gun Island* is also trying to liberate himself. After his father's death, Piya took care of Tipu's education and all. Tipu exiled to America and started studying there. After a couple of years he became very Americanized in language and culture. But he had to go back to his own country because of his deeds. Tipu lied to his family about his job and illegally crossed the national border with forged papers. The character of Tipu throws light on the fact that Tipu is not interested in Indian culture and earn more money that he could not attain in his home country.

The Living Mountain: A Fable for Our Times discusses about environmental colonialism. Ghosh highlights the ways in which the colonizer changed the landscape of the colonized land. It is about the colonizer gradually approaching the land, learning the secrets of the land from its people and taking all the control over the land and people. By enslaving the varvarois or native people, the Anthro pois attack the valley and conquer the Mahaparbat mountain. This work of Amitav Ghosh is in the form of an environmental fable portrayed in a colonial perspective.

Amitav Ghosh portrays postcolonial elements in his graphic verse novel *Jungle Nama* also. He shows the utopian possibility of peaceful co-existence. The protagonist Dukhey is exploited by his uncle Dhona for his own benefits. Even though the story is an allegory for human caused climate change, we can observe uncle Dhona as a colonial representative.

The impact and effects of colonialism still existing even after the decolonisation process. In *Beginning Postcolonialism* McLeod says,

“Postcololialism’ recognises both historical continuity and change. On the other hand, it acknowledges that the material realities and modes of representation common to colonialism are still very much with us today, even if the political map of the world has changed through decolonialisation”.

It is ironical that even after seven decades of independence, the legacy of the British continues in almost all sectors of governance – from judiciary to policing, military practices and even in Parliament, the look, feel, protocol and practices still gives a glimpse of the colonial regime. Ghosh’s account of the influence of English literature on Bengali literature as having been not only a modernising but indeed a civilising force indicates that he had fully internalised the British colonial claim that their rule in India was a civilising mission.

Ghosh’s diligent observations bring out the fact that the postcolonial Indians were dominated through the process of cultural denigration by the imposition of a supposedly superior racial model. An unadulterated Indian sensibility is the hallmark of Ghosh’s novels which is general present a microcosm of India created for fictional purposes and an imaginative encapsulation of the Indian revolutionary spirit opposing British hegemony.

REFERENCES

1. Ghosh, Amitav. Gun island. India: Penguin. 2019
2. Ghosh, Amitav. Jungle Nama. India: Fourth Estate, 2021.
3. Ghosh, Amitav. Sea of Poppies. New Delhi: RaviDayalPublisher, 2008.
4. Ghosh, Amitav. The Living Mountain: a Fable of our Times. Harper Collins, 2022.
5. Gandhi, Leela. Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.
6. McLeod, John. Beginning Postcolonialism. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000.
7. Said, Edward W. Culture and Imperialism. London : Chatto and Windus, 1993.
8. <https://academic.oup.com/fmls/article/43/2/121/529353>

9. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jungle_Nama
10. <https://doi.org/10.26650/LITERA2021-871879>
11. shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/111518/12/12_chapter5.pdf